

Dear Senators,

I'm writing to you as a parent to two physically handicapped children, Alex and Sarah Stanton, both with vision issues that has been helped tremendously by the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESBE). While my children are not completely blind, they are legally blind and have nystagmus which negatively impact their eyesight in school and in their lives.

BESBE has been a Godsend because the service provides education and correct equipments that have helped my children in their daily lives, especially in the academic setting. From making sure the school provide large print books, specialized screens in the classrooms, my children are able to function as their peers, and even excel in all their school subjects because now they can see better in school. BESBE employees have been tremendous in educating the teachers in the school and also us (the parents) to better serve the needs of the children.

Our BESBE representative Suzanne Cappiello has been invaluable to me, my children and even our school system as she has worked with our school system, in many instance educating the school and us as parents, to ensure Alex and Sarah have proper visual aids in the school and home settings. I have witness my children's confidence soar as they are doing better in school now that they can see better. BESBE has been key in helping my children grow independently despite the many challenges they have faced in their lives.

To consolidate the agencies will cause confusion, will not save money, but rather result in irreparable damage to the services that have been provided to my children as well as to all the visually challenged children in this state.

I thank you in advance for your consideration to keep BESBE as an individual agency in this State.

Sincerely,

Cindy and Michael Stanton
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Westport, CT 06880